



HB 2144 (Landes)

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Reading is Fundamental: Standards of Quality; waivers from third grade Standards of Learning assessments in certain scenarios. Allows a public elementary school that has an adjusted pass rate of less than 75 percent on the third grade Standards of Learning reading assessment administered during the previous school year to apply to the Board of Education for a two-year waiver from the science, or history and social science, or both Standards of Learning assessment requirement for third grade students. Elementary schools that apply for a two-year waiver must satisfy certain conditions to be granted the waiver. The bill will expire on July 1, 2015.

Key Points

- Reading proficiency by third grade is an important predictor of high school graduation and career success. Governor McDonnell's legislation will improve reading achievement for students reading below grade level by creating additional instructional time for reading specialists to work with them. The additional time will be granted through SOL testing waivers.
- According to the Annie Casey Foundation, Students who are not proficient in reading by third grade are four times more likely to fail to graduate from high school than proficient readers.
- One in six children who are not reading proficiently in third grade do not graduate from high school on time
- For a school to be eligible for the waiver, it must be accredited with warning in reading or have a reading pass rate of less than 75 percent.
- To receive a waiver, a school must have a full-time reading specialist to support teachers and students and be dedicated to instruction in the Science or History and Social Science Standards of Learning in kindergarten through third grade.
- Currently, 38 Virginia schools will be eligible for the waiver.

Supporters: Partners in Innovation

- ✓ Virginia Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Fairfax Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Dulles regional Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce
- ✓ More to be announced...

"We will never close the achievement gap, we will never solve our dropout crisis, we will never break the cycle of poverty that afflicts so many children if we don't make sure that all our students learn to read,"
Ralph Smith, executive vice president of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, said in a news release.